

THE UNOFFICIAL GLOCK ARMORER'S MANUAL

Compiled by John Hisghman

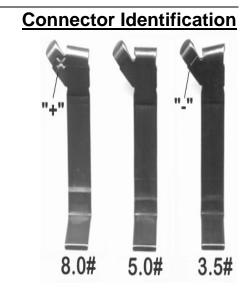


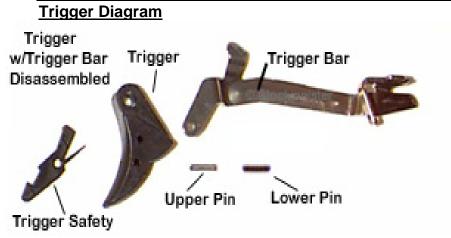
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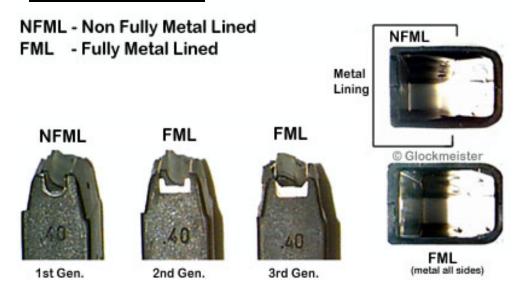
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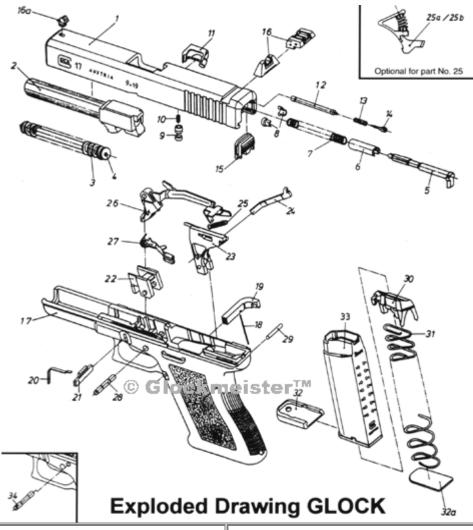






Magazine Identification





- 1. Slide
- 2. Barrel
- 3. Recoil spring assembly
- 4. Recoil spring assembly
- 5. Firing pin
- 6. Spacer sleeve
- 7. Firing pin spring
- 8. Spring cups
- 9. Firing pin safety
- 10. Firing pin safety spring
- 11. Extractor
- 12. Extractor depressor plunger
- 13. Extractor depressor plunger spring
- 14. Spring-loaded bearing
- 15. Slide cover plate
- 16. Rear sight
- 16a.Front sight
- 17. Receiver
- 18. Magazine catch spring

- 19. Magazine catch
- 20. Slide lock spring
- 21. Slide lock
- 22. Locking block
- 23. Trigger mechanism housing with ejector
- 24. Connector
- 25. Trigger spring
- 25a. New York Trigger spring 1
- 25b. New York Trigger spring 2
- 26. Trigger with Trigger bar
- 27. Slide stop lever
- 28. Trigger pin
- 29. Trigger housing pin
- 30. Follower
- 31. Magazine spring
- 32. Magazine floor plate
- 32a. Magazine insert
- 33. Magazine tube
- 34. Locking block pin:
- (mod. G18/20/21/22/23/24/25/26/27/28/29/30/31/32/33/35)

THE GLOCK FIELD STRIP DISASSEMBLY



For normal cleaning, it is sufficient to dismantle the pistol into its main component parts (see above graphic):

- Slide
- Barrel
- Recoil Spring Assembly
- Receiver
- Magazine
- 1. Glock pistols are stripped into their component parts in the following order:
 - 1. Remove Magazine
 - 2. Depress Trigger
 - 3. Remove Slide
 - 4. Remove Barrel

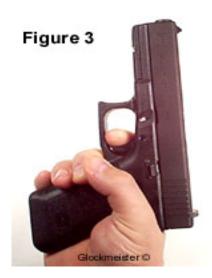
2. Remove the magazine (Fig. 1)



3. Check for round in the chamber (Fig. 2 - repeat three times for safety)

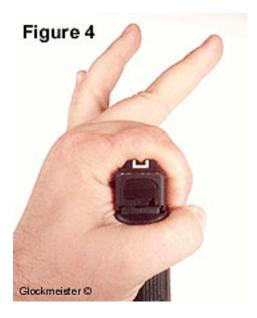


4. Depress trigger (Fig. 3 - pointing in a safe direction)



5. Remove slide from receiver

 Grasp the pistol in the right or left hand in such a way that four fingers rest over the slide and the thumb rests on the rear side of the receiver (Fig. 4 - make an O.K. with your hand and slip the beaver tail and end of the slide through the palm side of the O.K. hole)



 Using the fingers draw back the slide no more than 1/16" (Fig. 5 - if you pull the slide back too far - you will need to rack the slide, pull the trigger and repeat this step).



- Pull the slide lock downward with the thumb and index finger of the free hand (Fig. 5 pull both tabs down at once to the bottom of the groove).
- While holding the slide lock tabs down, push the slide forward and separate it from the receiver (Fig. 5 & 6).



6. Removal of the barrel:

- Push the recoil spring assembly somewhat forward with the thumb and raise it (caution spring is under tension).
- · Remove recoil spring assembly from the slide.
- Grasp the barrel on the barrel locking lugs, lift and push it slightly forward, raise and pull back out of the slide.

7. Reassembly of the Glock pistol:

• Carry out the above instructions in reverse order (although it is not necessary to pull down the tabs on the slide lock).

CLEANING THE FIELD STRIPPED FIREARM

The Glock pistol should be cleaned after each shooting session. Once field stripped, the barrel and chamber are easily cleaned from the **chamber end**. The inside of the slide and receiver should be wiped clean along with the outside of the barrel. We suggest one of the many quality non-toxic solvents that are available in today's gun cleaning market. This will ensure proper functioning of your Glock pistol.

As with any semi-automatic pistol, Glock pistols **should not** be cleaned by merely locking the slide to the rear and inserting the cleaning rod from the muzzle end. This can cause excessive amounts of solvents to build-up in both the receiver, slide and possibly contribute to malfunctions of the pistol. The pistol should be field stripped every time it is cleaned.

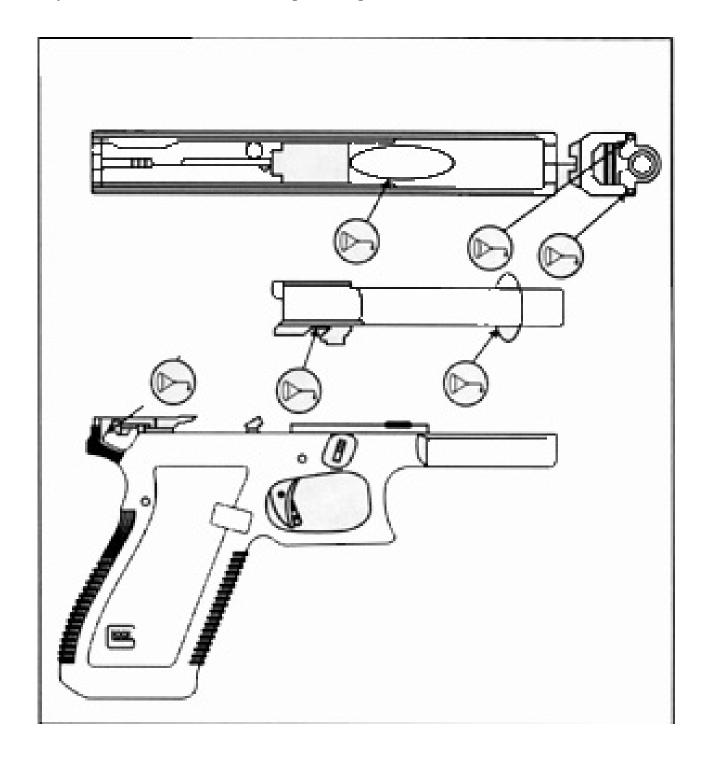
DO NOT CLEAN THE GLOCK FROM THE MUZZLE END

- 1. The inside of both the chamber and the barrel should be wiped completely dry once they have been thoroughly cleaned. The breech face and the area under the extractor claw should both be absolutely dry and free of any debris after cleaning.
- 2. The slide rail cuts should be cleaned thoroughly by using a clean patch on the end of a toothbrush-type cleaning tool.
- 3. With the clean patch wrapped over the brush portion of the toothbrush, thoroughly clean the slide rail cuts of all debris and solvents.
- 4. All other areas of the slide and receiver should be checked for cleanliness. Most parts in the receiver may be wiped with a clean, soft cloth.
- 5. After the parts in the receiver have been cleaned, they should be wiped dry with a clean, soft cloth. All solvents should be wiped from the parts so the parts are clean and dry,
- 6. Note: 6" cotton tipped applicators (wooden stems) by Patterson Dental Company can get into the corners and hard to get at areas. The wooden tip is great to clean out the slide rail cuts. Q-Tip style cotton swabs also work well.

THE GLOCK DOES NOT REQUIRE EXCESSIVE LUBRICATION
PLEASE REFER TO THE LUBRICATION SECTION TO SEE DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS.

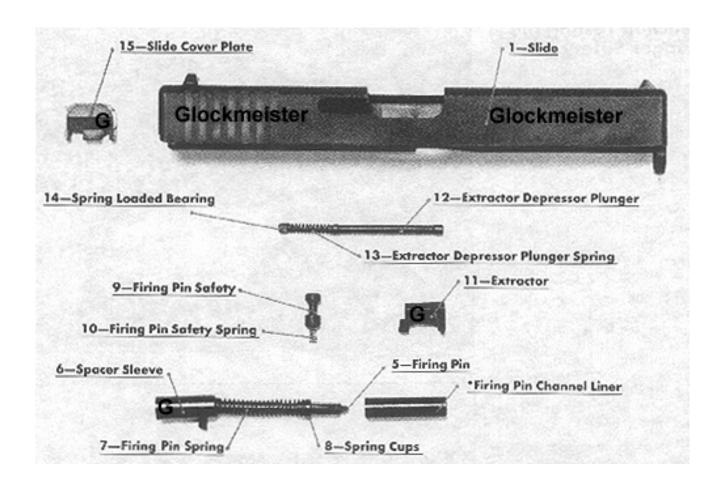
LUBRICATION POINTS

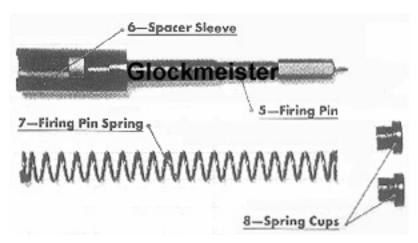
Only Lubricate the Glock according the diagram below:



DO NOT OVER-LUBRICATE THE GLOCK

SLIDE DISASSEMBLY / FIRING-PIN REPLACEMENT

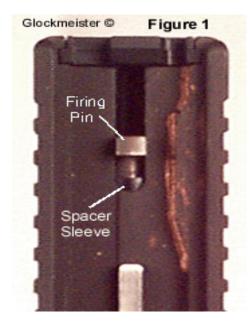


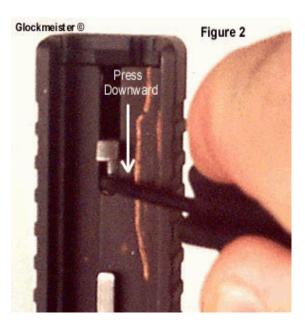


SAFETY CAUTION:

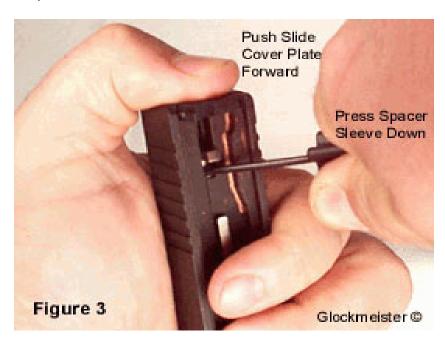
The firing pin assembly and extractor depressor plunger are under tension. While removing the slide cover plate, place your thumb over the firing pin assembly and extractor depressor plunger to prevent these parts from ejecting while removing the slide cover plate.

1. To aid in the removal of the slide cover plate, place the muzzle end of the slide on a smooth, flat surface such as a table. Keep the slide in and upright position while applying firm downward pressure on the slide. With your free hand use your Glock disassembly tool to push the spacer sleeve forward (see figures 1 & 2).





Simultaneously, slide the cover plate down and off (Figure 3) - remember to keep the
tensioned firing pin assembly and extractor depressor plunger from springing out. It is
possible that the slide cover plate will require some additional downward force during
disassembly of a new pistol. A thin bladed screwdriver may be used to start removal
(don't force it).



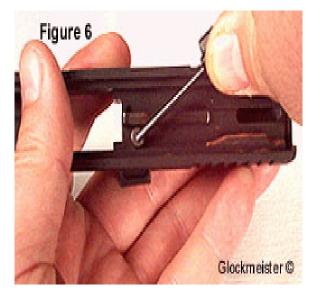
3. Remove the firing pin assembly (figure 4).



4. Remove the extractor depressor plunger assembly (figure 5) consisting of: extractor depressor plunger, extractor depressor plunger spring and the spring loaded bearing.



5. While depressing the firing pin safety, remove the extractor (figures 6 & 7). The extractor may need to be pushed from the extractor groove by using your Glock disassembly tool in the rear of the extractor and lifting the extractor from the groove.



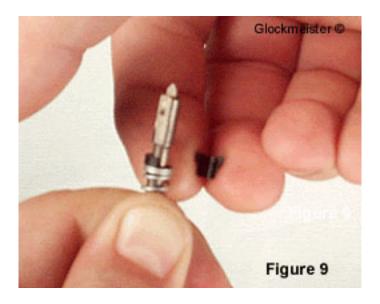


6. Remove the firing pin safety (figure 8). If the safety does not drop out of the slide; the slide may be tapped on a non-metallic surface to free the firing pin safety. Be careful not to lose the firing pin safety spring when removing the safety.



Before you disassemble the firing pin assembly, wipe the assembly with a clean dry cloth to **remove any excess lubrication or solvent**.

7. Pull down on the firing pin spring with the thumb and forefinger as far as possible to allow clearance for removal of the firing pin spring cups. Be sure to keep a firm grasp on the firing pin spring so that it does not launch itself and possibly cause injury or become lost. Simultaneously remove the two spring cups, then gradually release tension on the firing pin spring and remove it (figure 9). Now you can remover the spacer sleeve.



- 8. When reassembling the firing pin assembly, ensure that the small ends of the spring cups are inside the firing pin spring. Reverse all procedures for reassembly.
- 9. Remember To Do A Firing Pin Safety Check After This Procedure.

GLOCK FIRING PIN SAFETY CHECK

Make sure that the firing pin safety is properly engaged by pulling the tang of the firing pin toward the rear of the slide (do not allow the firing pin to snap forward - ease it forward). Next, hold the slide in the palm of your hand, sights down, with your thumb pushing the tang of the firing pin forward. The firing pin should not protrude from the firing pin hole. If it does, the firing pin and firing pin safety should be replaced.

Assuring the firing pin is released by the firing pin safety:

Method One

First make sure the firing pin safety is engaged and then hold the slide in a Muzzle Down position and depress the firing pin safety. The tip of the firing pin should move forward and be visible protruding from the firing pin hole. The firing pin may need to be pushed forward when the pistol is new, so that it will protrude from the firing pin hole.

Method Two

Depress the firing pin safety and shake the slide. When the firing pin safety is depressed, the firing pin should be heard moving freely. When the firing pin safety is not depressed, the firing pin should be nearly silent.

The above information is only being presented as general information.

Please note that there could be more wrong with a firing system in a Glock than is outlined above.

If you are having problems with your firing system, consult a qualified Glock Armorer.

Maintenance should not be performed by anyone other than a Glock Certified Armorer.

RECEIVER DISASSEMBLY

AFTER FIELD STRIPPING THE GLOCK:

1. Grasp the front portion of the receiver and remove the locking block pin with your 3/32" disassembly tool (see figure 1). Older models 17, 17L and 19 do not have a locking block pin, so skip the above step for these models. Remember the locking block pin is the first pin to be removed and the first pin to be reinstalled. If you install the locking block pin after you install the slide stop lever, you will bend and damage the slide stop lever spring.



2. Next, remove the trigger pin. To facilitate trigger pin removal, the slide stop lever should be moved forward and rearward while applying pressure on the trigger pin (see figure 2). DO NOT use any excessive force (such as a hammering implement) to remove the trigger pin. This will unhook the slide stop lever spring from the groove in the trigger pin. Remember to remove it from left to right!



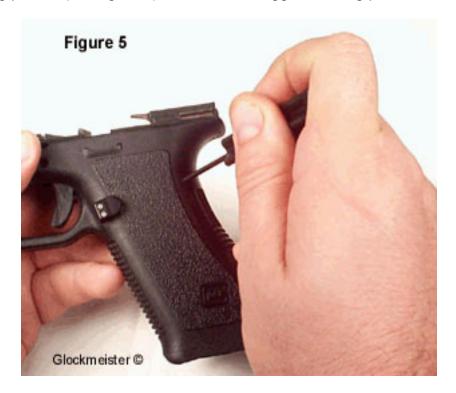
3. With the trigger pin removed, withdraw the slide stop lever by pulling it back and out (see figure 3.). NOTE: When reinstalling the slide stop lever in the pistol, be sure it locks into the grove in the trigger pin. To function check the slide release lever, lift it from its rest position and release it. It should snap back into position crisply. If it fails to do so, make sure the spring is not binding or bent and check to make sure the slide stop release is riding in the groove in the trigger pin.



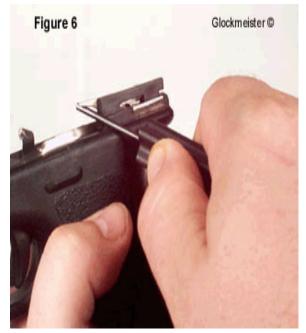
4. With the locking block pin and trigger pin removed, use your disassembly tool to raise the locking block (see figure 4). Note: Pry up from the left side of the locking block to avoid damaging the trigger bar.



5. Now move to the rear of the gun and use your disassembly tool to push the trigger-housing pin out (see figure 5). Remove the trigger-housing pin.

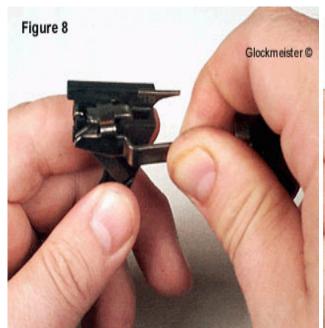


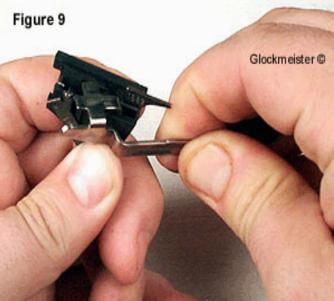
6. With the trigger housing pin removed use your disassembly tool to apply pressure under the ejector to raise the complete trigger assembly from the receiver (see figure 6). Then raise the rear most portion of the trigger assembly above the receiver and withdraw the complete assembly (see figure 7).



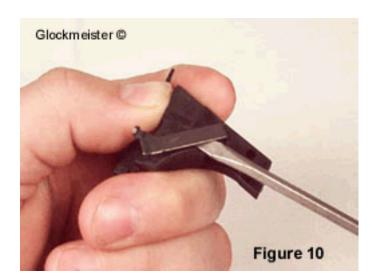


7. Next comes the trigger assembly takedown. Hold the trigger assembly as shown in figure 8. Pull forward on the trigger with the trigger bar while rotating the trigger bar counterclockwise (figure 9). At this point, the trigger with trigger bar can be lifted from the trigger mechanism housing.





8. Separate the trigger with the trigger bar from the coiled spring by working the hooked end of the trigger spring off the trigger bar. Separate the trigger mechanism housing from the trigger spring. Note: Notice that the opening of the spring faces up in final installation at the point where it is installed in the trigger mechanism housing.



- 9. Remove the connector, as shown in figure 10.
- 10. Reinstallation is reverse of the above processes DO NOT force anything into place.

STOCK COIL & NEW YORK TRIGGER SPRING INSTALLATION

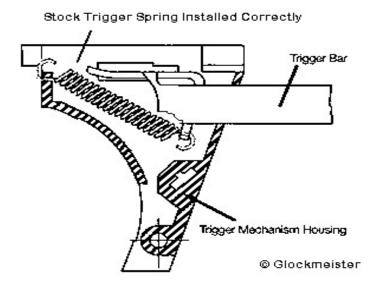


Figure 1. Above is the stock coil trigger spring installed correctly

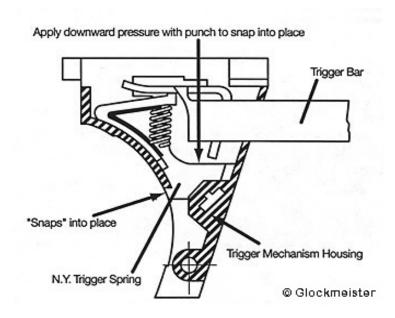


Figure 2. Before installing the New York Trigger Spring, be sure that the connector fits tightly in the Trigger Mechanism Housing. If the Connector does not fit tightly - you will need to replace the Trigger Mechanism Housing to ensure a tight fit for the connector.

There are two New York Trigger Springs the Olive (about 8 pounds) and the Orange (about 11 pounds). Either spring should only be installed with the 3.5-pound Connector or the 5-pound Connector. **Do Not Use Either Of The NY Trigger Springs With The 8 Pound Connector**

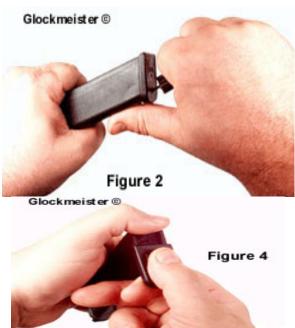
GLOCK MAGAZINE DISASSEMBLY

1. For the old style floorplates (the ones without the hole - break down and get the newer style), hold the magazine as shown in figure 4. Push the floor plate with the thumb of the weak hand and pull with the thumb of the strong hand. As soon as the floorplate starts to move, re-position your hand so your thumb retains the magazine spring. Remove the floorplate, magazine spring and follower.

CAUTION: The magazine spring is under tension. Be sure to maintain downward pressure on magazine spring with your thumb while disassembling.



Figure 3



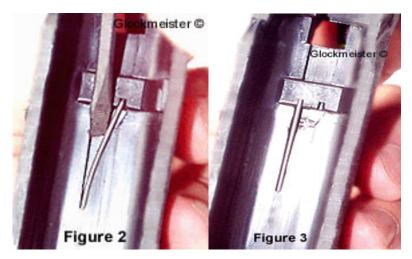
1. To remove the floorplate with the magazine insert, insert the disassembly tool into the hole in the floorplate 1-2 inches (as shown in figure 2 above), push the insert down, pry against the mag spring inside the mag (levering off the floor plate - Figure 3) and now remove the floorplate. As soon as the floorplate starts to move, reposition your hand so your thumb retains the magazine spring (figure 4). Remove the floorplate, magazine spring and follower.



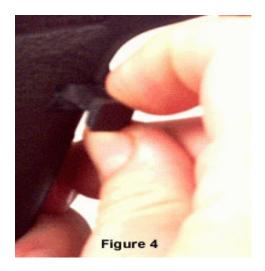
MAGAZINE CATCH REMOVAL

- 1. Use a screwdriver to push the magazine catch spring out of the magazine catch groove. Be sure to press the right side of the magazine catch with a finger to prevent the magazine catch from moving when starting to push the magazine catch spring out of the groove.
- 2. Start with the screwdriver (small bladed) to the left of the magazine catch spring (figure 1).





- 3. Push the spring to the right and then pry it out of the groove located on the bottom of the magazine catch (see figure 2). The spring should be completely clear of the catch groove (figure 3)
- 4. Remove the magazine catch from the right side of the receiver (see figure 4).



- 5. When reinstalling the magazine catch, you will need to lightly pry the magazine catch spring toward the back of the receiver. This will allow you to get the magazine catch past the spring.
- 6. To reinstall, reverse the procedure.

Notes		
GLOCK MODEL NUMBER		
GLOCK SERIAL NUMBER		
PURCHASED FROM:	Purchase Price: \$	
Misc.		

CLOSE QUARTERS COMBAT - THE SOLUTION

We know that urban gunfights are short duration, high intensity events characterized by sudden violence at close range. The actual distances, however, might astound many whose total CQB training program consists of "hammers" at seven yards. You see, over 85% of these fights actually occur much closer -- like within 10 feet! Many of them, in fact, take place well within arm's length.

Rather than being "unthinkable", as one popular writer claims, such truly close quarters are quite the norm. The dynamics involved in this type of fight are no different than those for any other type of close quarters combat. As I tell my CQB students, at such a close interval, even a blind man with a rusty homemade zip gun can get lucky.

At these distances, simply standing tall and drawing quickly is not sufficient. We must take many issues into consideration when programming our reflexes in response to this. We must, for example, take into account how human reaction time dynamics affect our decision-action cycle. Generally speaking, the man who moves first, or initiates the action will win. The man who waits and reacts, on the other hand will usually lose. Simply put, marksmanship being equal, Action beats Re-Action. If you simply stand and fast-draw when you see your "threat", you will always be approximately ‡ to a full second behind the decision-action power curve. At best, you'll shoot him an instant after he shoots you, or cuts you or whatever. Not a good situation is it?

These action-reaction dynamics are unavoidable. It is simply how we are neurologically programmed. These dynamics were first described by the late Col. John Boyd as the Observation-Orientation-Decision-Action Loop (OODA Loop for short). A fight, of any kind, is simply an event where each competitor Observes his opponent, Orients himself in relation to the opponent, Decides on a course of action based on those observations, and finally Acts out his decision. Whoever gets through that cycle the quickest has a remarkable advantage over the other fellow. An operator who is already at the Action phase, for example, has a head start over someone who is still observing and orienting at the beginning of their own cycle. Things may be done to short-circuit or forestall the opponent's cycle, but we will get to those later.

Let's look at this from a practical perspective from a scenario perhaps. Put yourself in this situation. You are facing your adversary at 3 yards (we'll be generous with the distance). He suddenly goes for the stolen revolver in his waistband, as he yells, "Die Pig Die"! What do you do? Any potentially successful technique has to do two things, at once!

- 1). It must allow you to get your pistol out and working in order to place some rounds on board and put the other man down before he can carry out his plans.
- 2). It must move you out of the line of fire, hopefully causing the other man to miss you with his initial shots.

Just as your opponent went through his decision cycle prior to beginning his attack, he must repeat this cycle each and every time something changes from the condition he saw it in when he acted. He must repeat this cycle for every new and unexpected

development in the confrontation before he can change his tactics. This may take just fractions of seconds, but that may be all you need. This business is, after all, a business of fractions of seconds where the slightest advantage may mean the difference between living and dying.

One answer for the 3-yard interval is to condition a reflexive lateral side-step into your close quarters pistol presentation. This may be enough to move you out of the line of fire sufficiently to cause the opponent to miss you with the first few rounds. He will be forced to reevaluate and alter his actions, but not before you get your own weapon into action. This simple side step allows you to operate within his OODA Loop.

If the confrontation is closer, say within one step of physical contact, presenting the pistol to a standard firing position, even if preceded by a side-step wont work. This will create a weapon retention problem for you, and probably develop into an ugly wrestling match for your pistol.

Conventional wisdom says to simply "step back" and draw. I was a proponent of this method for some time, but have learned that there are other, better, ways.

You see, simply stepping to the rear only creates a gap where the adversary can gain ground on you. Additionally, nobody can move back faster than an aggressor can move forward. This is never a problem if you only practice on cardboard targets, which never advance on you. If you train with human adversaries and "Red Gun" sessions, you will quickly learn that an aggressive advancing opponent will simply run right over you if you do not alter your "Step Back".

To win, we must short circuit the opponent's decision-action loop by changing their perception of the event quickly and drastically. A sharp finger jab to the eye, a palm strike to the face/nose area, or even a simply palm heel to the chest will cause a slight hesitation, if not a complete rethinking of their attack plan. This may not, in truth, be a fight-stopper, but it will buy you time. The time you bought can now be used to step clear of him (to the rear, or the side) and get your own weapon into action. You can make your first step to the rear, but be certain that any subsequent steps are made to the sides or laterally. In training, I suggest making the first step a backward step, and taking the secondary steps laterally.

Critics of the concept of blending hand-to-hand fighting skills with tactical pistol shooting suggest that operators must "either shoot or fight, but not both". They suggest that an adversary will simply grab your support hand when you try to use an auxiliary striking/distraction technique. This smacks of a naiveté about actual physical confrontations. Nobody throws a punch and holds it out there for the cameras! These are quick, violent movements. At these distances, any strikes are unlikely to be blocked, caught, or avoided. Unless you are literally moving in slow motion, and even if the strike were to somehow miss the adversary, your hand will be back and away from the opponent before he even realizes he's seen it.

Remember the issues of reaction time when someone questions the need for a distraction strike. This technique is also functional if there is no maneuver room to the rear. In this case, the distractive move is identical, but instead of moving to the rear, you move to the 10:00 or the 2:00 area of the opponent, and then continue as usual.

What if he's closer? I mean really close. What if he's so close that he could head butt you as he discusses the fine points of your parent's doubtful relationship to the animal kingdom?? What then??

One popular technique that has been taught for years has been the Speed Rock. This involves "rocking" the pistol out of the holster and rolling the torso back to orient the muzzle on target. For a long time, I was a proponent of this technique. We got to the point where two quick shots could be "speed rocked" into a target in three quarters of a second! This is a useful technique if you are backed up against a table or vehicle, but not a good idea at any other time. There are better ways, Grasshopper. Being a specialty technique, it should be reserved for special occasions. Even there, however, it has some serious flaws.

Primarily, the requirement to keep the support hand down by the belt, instead of up in a fighting/defensive posture is extremely unrealistic. We've already discussed why moving back is not wise, yet the Speed Rock places you in an off balanced condition where flat-on-your-back is the only follow up you have. Moreover, even if you successfully "speed rocked" a couple of rounds into your man, do you really think he'll just fall down in place? Hardly! Even if he's been hit solidly, his own momentum will probably carry him right into you. With your "rocked back" posture you can't move laterally to avoid him, and you are not in a position of strength to absorb the collision. And forget about being able to respond to a Failure to Stop. No sir, not good at all! There is, of course, an alternative.

The Close Contact Pistol Position is suitable for this encounter interval and has none of the failings of the Speed Rock. I conducted electronic timer drills and found that the Close Contact Position is just as fast as the Speed Rock.

Tests with human training partner/adversaries showed that even if they managed to physically "crash" into me, I was in a position of strength, and able to maintain balance. This position also allowed the ability to move laterally or even go to alternate "body weapons". None of this was possible with the Speed Rock.

The Close Contact Position places the pistol alongside the upper torso, along the ribs. The pistol is indexed by having the primary/firing hand thumb and the butt of the pistol in contact with the torso. This in turn, allows the pistol to be canted slightly outboard to avoid snagging on clothing or equipment. Additionally, this automatically orients the pistol muzzle on the adversary's thoracic cavity area.

The torso is held erect, in a strong fighting posture, which is braced for impact. The support hand is held in a fighting/defensive posture. This can either be out to the support side in a "warding off" type of posture, or "elbow up and forward" with the support hand protecting the pistol, and in a position to execute a strike with the bottom of the fist. These simple advantages of the Close Contact make the Speed Rock virtually obsolete.

The Close Contact Position is executed in place, but immediately after the first shots have been fired, or contact is made otherwise, you must move. The first step may be to the rear, but any subsequent steps must be lateral. The Step Back Maneuver or the Close Contact Technique may be executed from the ready pistol or holstered positions, and to any point along a 360-degree circle.

OK, so you've drilled the Bad Guy, amidships, twice from close quarters. Now What? The only thing for certain when those shots have been fired is that the fight has begun.

Don't call out for pizza yet! It's important to keep firing until the fight is over, or until the adversary is no longer a threat. The idea that you should fire a couple of times, and then stand around looking for results is not really a tactically wise procedure is it?

Again, the issue of reaction time is considered, both yours and his. Let's say you stopped shooting after a couple of shots and then while you are readjusting your orientation to the situation, realize you have a Failure to Stop. Furthermore, his pistol is now pointed right at you. Regardless of what you do next, you are now behind the action of the times, and he is operating within your OODA Loop. In truth, you will probably be able to see your opponent's reaction to your gunfire in your peripheral vision, even if you are focusing exclusively on your front sight (as well you should be). It's important to keep firing while the adversary(s) is still visible. This doesn't mean that you empty your politically-correct 10 round magazine into his chest, but rather that after 2-4 shots, you should always stage your pistol for the head shot.

Not staging the pistol for the head shot is akin to getting into a fist fight with an opponent of unknown skill, and then after hitting him once, stopping to see if it worked! Handguns, you must understand, are ballistically deficient and cannot be trusted regardless of what you've loaded them with. A failure to stop is very likely, so expect it. You are conditioning yourself to stage, or prepare for it, not necessarily to fire. If there is no target visible when you stage for the shot, you will obviously not fire. In this case, lower the pistol sharply to the Ready Pistol Position, and your adversary will most likely be on the deck. Now ask yourself: "Did I Hit Him? - Did It Work?" If not, hit him again. Even if he's down, he may not be out. Stay Alert! If he's down, look for accomplices, as these guys usually do not work alone. If, as you stage for the headshot, you see your front sight super-imposed on his face, you have a Failure to Stop. By preparing for it, you are in a solid position to solve it with minimal drama.

Pistol fighting at close quarters is conceptually very similar to close quarter's combat of any sort. Warriors have been studying this and killing each other at conversational distances for centuries. The historical record is full of useful information. Another excellent source of information, are the many unarmed/contact weapon combat disciplines. To think that the presence of the firearm somehow elevates the user from the need to consider and understand these issues is foolish and unrealistic. In close quarters combat, there are no short cuts.

THE EFFECTS OF HUMAN REACTION TIME ON THE OUTCOMES OF CLOSE QUARTERS CONFRONTATIONS

There are many ideas floating around these days regarding the issue of close quarters gunfights, and how the dynamics involved interact with one another. Many of these myths and legends come from the theoretical training, or competitive arenas while others come from spending too much time watching action heroes on the wide screen. One myth, for example, is that you are not justified in shooting an armed adversary unless he actually has his gun pointing at you, or unless he has already fired at you. Another inaccurate idea is that you can be fast enough to react to a surprise threat. None of these notions is really an accurate assessment of real life situations, but they are surprisingly widely held beliefs.

Other than rare personal experience, the only way to accurately determine what really happens in these situations is to ask those who've experienced these circumstances firsthand. This is simply a scientific examination of history, or what has happened in the past, since history tends to repeat itself. Often however, we must go farther in history than preferred simply because most modern "shooters" tend to be reluctant about discussing their actual experiences due to various social/judicial reasons. This is not as much of a hindrance to the interested student as one might originally think. The dynamics involved in the gunfights of 1999 South Central, for example, closely parallel those of gunfights in 1899 Dodge City. The nature of the people involved, and even their weapons haven't changed very much at all. Whether these incidents occurred 100 years ago or 100 days ago, the dynamics of an urban gunfight remain amazingly constant. These are usually unannounced high-intensity, short duration events characterized by sudden violence after which one or both parties are either down, or have quit the fight. Moreover, these events tend to be very close range and often in poor light. Under these circumstances, some constant trends become very clear.

Marksmanship ability being equal, we find that aggressive, pro-active shooters tend to win, whereas defensive, re-active shooters tend to lose. Now, I hear you guys out there moaning that we have to be defensive. It is true that our policies and laws dictate that "Defense" must always be the over-riding concept in our tactical activities. Exactly how this defensive concept is applied, however, remains to be answered. Anyone who understands fighting knows that offense and defense are two sides of the same coin.

The defensive aspects are simply the actual r-e-a-s-o-n-s we are deploying our weapons in the first place, not necessarily the actual tactics used. Once the decision has been made to deploy, however, it is offense all the way. Can you imagine, for example, winning a fistfight by only blocking your adversary's punches and never throwing a punch yourself? Not likely is it?

The key lies in knowing when to act. In truth, it lies in knowing that you must act. The two extremes in this case are - 1) Never Shooting under any circumstance, with the end result being death at the hands of another. Or 2) Shooting at the slightest provocation, perhaps unjustifiably, with the end result being imprisonment. As with most things, the best answer lies somewhere in the middle.

Regardless of the time and place, the techniques, tools, and tactics (whether offensive or defensive) only come into play after the critical decision has been made. Some very well armed and trained individuals have lost their lives due to indecision or simply because of inattention. It should be obvious that if we wait to see the other man's muzzle flash, it will probably be too late to do anything about it. Even if we are very fast, our reactions will never be as fast as his initial action. The trick is to "react" before he gets his attack fully on the road.

How we determine this is predicated on our full understanding of the Rules of Engagement that we operate under. Everyone has these directives, whether you are a police officer, a soldier, or a private citizen. In general, the Core Defensive Concept can be characterized by the acronym I.D.O.L. (Immediate Defense of Life).

This concept must guide our actions. When presented with a tactical problem, you must ask the question, "If I don't kill this man - right now, what will happen?" If the answer is not "death or serious injury" to you or someone else, then the gun is not the answer. The pure reason of this concept cannot be disputed.

Once the Core Defensive Concept is understood, and fully internalized (known by heart, like the ABC's), things will largely depend on your Situational Awareness, or awareness of your environment. "Where Am I & what is Going On Around Me?" Swift reactions are good, but getting ahead of the event is even better. Getting ahead of the event, and staying ahead of it is best of all. Lack of Situational Awareness gets people killed or seriously injured.

<u>Case Point #1</u>: The famous shootist, William Hicock, one of the best pistol shooters in his day, feared by his colleagues, and winner (not merely a survivor - a winner) of numerous gunfights, is shot in the back - by surprise - because he was not paying attention to his environment.

Case Point #2: An incident not two weeks old. A private citizen is walking home late at night. He decides to take a short cut through an alley. While walking in the alley, he is approached by a hoodlum-type that asks, "What time is it?" Our oblivious and compliant citizen looks down at his watch, and the next thing he remembers is waking up in the emergency room with a laceration on his head and his wallet and watch gone!

Where Am I? What is going on around me? Good situational awareness allows you to see the event (or enemy) and analyze the circumstances before the event is on top of you. This being the case, you can avoid the entire business if you choose to.

In 1989, a man named Mike Spick wrote a, now out-of-print, book titled The Ace Factor. In this book about successful fighter aces, pilots who'd killed over five enemy planes, Spick describes good Situational Awareness as the factor separating Aces from other pilots. He says, "These men avoided high confusion melees & excelled at picking off stragglers. They were very aware of their natural limits and avoided situations where they could not keep the upper hand." While we generally do not have a need to "pick off stragglers", the issue of avoiding uncontrollable situations, and maintaining the advantage are good points to remember.

Good Situational Awareness lies in making use of the presented or available information. This is not only information of the criminal adversary, but also personal knowledge about your own abilities and your own situation when you see the enemy approaching. With good S/A, you begin to project your actions into the future. Instead of the adequate "Where am I and what is going around me?" you seek to develop, "Where am I going and what will I do when I get there?" Simply seeing and being aware of the potential problem at hand is not enough. What you do when the problem begins to unfold is also very important.

Col. John Boyd - USAF was a scholar in military tactics. One of the studies he undertook was that of aerial combat in the Korean War. He noted that the American Pilots had a 10:1 kill ratio over the North Koreans. He also noted that the MiG was a faster plane that could out climb the F-86 of the American forces. He wanted to find out why, if the MiG was in fact a better and faster airplane, were the Americans doing so well against them?

Boyd's studies revealed that one factor relating to our successes was that we had better trained pilots. That was not the whole picture however. The F-86, he learned, allowed dramatically better visibility than the MiG, and it had a set of hydraulic controls that allowed almost instant maneuverability.

Boyd reasoned that the better-trained American pilots could observe their enemy more quickly due to having greater visibility, and they could decide on a course of action faster due to good training. Once the course of action was decided, the faster control on the F-86 allowed them to execute maneuvers much faster than the MiG. Thus an F-86 pilot had little lag time in observation-orientation-decision-and action. They could operate inside the adversary's response time envelope.

The resulting extension of these findings to all areas of personal combat developed a concept that all conflicts were as duels between competitors in these duels each competitor. Observes his opponent, Orients himself to the opponent and the unfolding events, Decides on a course of action based on that orientation, training and experience, and finally Acts out his decision. This is the OODA Loop. Whoever moved through this process faster, gained a remarkable advantage over his foes by disrupting their ability to respond in a timely or effective manner. The Orientation portion of the cycle is the most important, and the weak point whereby an opponent may penetrate the decision cycle. This amounts to the recognition of danger, or the recognition of an enemy. Once this recognition is made, the roles of the meeting are laid out beforehand. For example, It can be argued that the Japanese operated within our OODA decision loop at Pearl Harbor, just as we operated within Hussein's OODA Loop in the Gulf War.

With this understanding, we can see that an aggressive shooter who initiates the action after proper observation, orientation, and decision will have an overwhelming advantage over a reactive individual. The reason is that the aggressive individual's cycle is at the end or action phase, whereas his opponent's cycle is at the beginning or middle. The aggressive individual has already oriented himself to his opponent (sometimes simply recognizing that he is, in fact, an enemy is enough), and decided on a course of action based on that orientation.

Everything is based on Situational Awareness - Where Am I? What is going On Around Me? Where Am I Going? What Will I Do When I Get there? An unfolding confrontation may be avoided, or it may be overcome unannounced, from a position of advantage. Common thinking is to always avoid, and this is not a bad policy, but sometimes you may want to attack.

Here are two instances which come to mind - Suppose you go to investigate that "proverbial" bump in the night, and find an armed home invader complete with ski mask and hunting knife, lurking just outside your child's bedroom door? He doesn't know you are there as he puts his hand on the doorknob. At what point is he in his decision-loop, and at what point is yours? To simply shoot this fellow would not be considered unreasonable, and would allow you to operate within his OODA Loop/decision cycle. Doing so would exploit your best tactical advantage. Is it justified? Remember the acronym I.D.O.L.? If you verbally challenge him, you give him the opportunity to orient to you, and do one of three things: Attack you, Surrender, or Rush into the bedroom to evade you. This means that you have a 33% chance of success. Not only that, but it will catch you mid-cycle and create a certain amount of lag-time in your response, since you are in "pause" waiting for him to respond.

Here's another scenario - You stop for lunch with your family at a McDonald's in a sleepy little border town. Right in the middle of your Chicken McNuggets, you see a middle aged man walk into the center of the restaurant. He has an UZI in his left hand, and a Street Sweeper Shotgun in his right hand. He is not wearing a uniform of any sort and is certainly NOT a policeman. He looks disheveled. He announces that he is going to kill everyone. You have Observed, and Oriented. He is obviously a criminal, and if you do not "render him safe", he will probably carry out his statement. You must now decide. If you can escape, you may want to do so. But if you cannot, is shooting him by surprise, before he can respond to you - perhaps in the back - a sound tactical option? Of course it is. These are not easy situations to be sure, but there is nothing easy about this stuff. This is a business of tenths and hundredths of seconds, where the slightest advantage may tip the scales.

The concept of the OODA loops, as applied to personal combat, has far reaching implications. It explains why waiting for the man to point the firearm at you is foolishly suicidal. It also explains the nature and source of lag time and how to best overcome it. If we understand this concept and apply it, it will work for us and not against us. Moreover, the concept is not in contradiction with the Core Defensive Concept (IDOL). If we stay true to the concept, and utilize our knowledge of human reaction time to our favor, we've gone a long way to reduce the dangers of close quarters confrontations, both in the field and later in court.